in various trades in the Industrial Training Institutes under the Technical Education Directorate;

(b) whether it is a fact that various institutes have not observed the rules in recruitment to the above posts during the last two years; and

(c) if, so, whether Government propose to hold an enquiry into the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The following qualification has been prescribed by National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) for the post of Group Instructors (formerly called Foremen) in State ITIs.

(i) Matric or equivalent

(ii) Diploma in Technology/Engineering

(iii) Five years practical experience in a reputed industrial concern or in a training institute.

(b) and (c) ITIs are under the administrative and financial control of State/UT Government. Staff are recruited by them as per recruitment rules and action, if any, is to be taken by the respective State Government/ UT in case of a deviation from rules.

Child Labour

969. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated figure of child labour in the country with names of major industries where they are employed;

(b) the punishment for employing child labour and whether the State authorities have ever raided these centre and apprehended the guilty officials for violation of the laws, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have taken a note of the procession taken out by the child labourers as reported in the Hindustan Times dated the 1st June, 2002, if so, the action being taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Authentic information on child labour in

the country is generated by the decennial census. According to the 1991 census, the number of working children in India is 11,28 million. The figures of the 2001 census have not been published. Industry wise figures of child labour are not maintained.

(b) Appropriate Governments are responsible for enforcement of the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. Employees found employing children in occupations and processes prohibited under the Act are prosecuted under the provisions of the Act which *inter-alia* provides for punishment with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three months but which may extend to one year or with fine which shall not be less than Rs. 10,000 but which may extend to Rs. 20,000 or with both. During the last four years from 1997—2001 9,35,737 inspections were conducted resulting in 21,420 prosecutions.

(c) The Government has noted the contents of the news-item referred. According to an independent survey conducted in 1998, 1350 children were found to be working in Jalandhar District of Punjab. These children are being rehabilitated through 27 special schools of 50 children each being run under the scheme of National Child Labour Projects. A Special check conducted by the State Government and NGOs, in February, 2002 in the sports goods industry did not find any child labour in the premises of the 23 establishments randomly checked.

Amendment in the Minimum Wages Act

970. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are proposing to bring amendment in the Minimum Wages Act for more stringent provisions; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) With a view to make the legal and penal provisions more stringent Government is exploring the possibilities to amend certain provisions of the Minimum Wages Act. However, given the steps and procedure involved, it is not possible to specify a definite time-frame.